



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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For Immediate Release

SENIORCARE PARTICIPANTS URGED TO RENEW THEIR BENEFITS

(MADISON – August 2, 2005) –The Department of Health and Family Services announced today it has mailed a letter to all current SeniorCare participants advising them to renew their SeniorCare benefits. The letter also offers guidance and urges participants to compare the program with the new federal Medicare Part D prescription drug program that becomes effective January 1, 2006.

“The two-year budget just signed by Governor Doyle preserves SeniorCare, which provides access to medicines that seniors need at a price they can afford,” said Helene Nelson, Secretary of Health and Family Services. “SeniorCare provides better prescription drug coverage at a lower cost for most Wisconsin seniors than the new Medicare benefit, but it is important for each individual to make a well-informed decision about which program is best for them,” notes Nelson.

The SeniorCare program provides prescription drug assistance for nearly 90,000 elderly participants.

More than half of all SeniorCare participants will receive a SeniorCare benefit renewal form between now and the end of the year. The Department strongly encourages participants to complete and return the renewal form, along with the enrollment fee, to avoid any lapse in prescription drug coverage. The Department says that even those interested in Medicare Part D should renew their SeniorCare benefits because Part D coverage does not begin until January 1, 2006.

Many SeniorCare participants have already received a mailing from the federal government about Medicare Part D. The mailing contains information about extra help they might be able to receive to help pay for premiums, deductibles and co-payments under the new federal program.

The Department suggests that all SeniorCare participants carefully examine how Part D compares to SeniorCare. Seniors with questions about SeniorCare or Medicare Part D benefits can contact the following:

- dhfs.wisconsin.gov
- The SeniorCare Hotline at 1-800-657-2038 for questions about SeniorCare.
- The County Department on Aging to speak to an elderly benefit specialist.
- The Prescription Drug Helpline at 1-866-456-8211 for Medicare beneficiaries with questions about Medicare Part D.

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